



# ***Town of Redding***

100 Hill Road, PO Box 1028  
Redding, Connecticut 06875

Natalie Ketcham  
First Selectman

203-938-2002  
FAX 203-938-8816

February 17, 2009

To the Honorable members of the Committee

Re: Proposed requirement that accessory apartments be considered as affordable housing

Affordable housing law in Connecticut provides incentives encouraging large scale developers to include affordable housing in their projects. But it does nothing to encourage such units in smaller communities that want to help in resolution of the affordable housing shortage but are inappropriate for major project housing because of steep slopes, shallow soils over ledge and lack of piped sewer and water.

About 89.5% of Redding's land surface lies on the watersheds of four public water supply reservoirs and one well field, all operated by the Aquarion Water Company. Protection of this vital water resource, which serves a regional population of approximately 520,000 persons, is a fundamental necessity of Town land use policy as well as an imperative expressed in the State Policies Plan and policies of the several regional plans of the area.

Affordable apartments accessory to residences – inside the house or in outbuildings like garages and barns – are actually discouraged under the law. For an accessory apartment to be state-certified as affordable, its proprietor must deed restrict it for 10 years to adherence with state prescribed rent levels of affordability. This disincentive needs to be offset by incentives for creating new affordable accessory apartments and for maintaining affordability on a continuing basis. This might be done through legislation permitting communities to grant property tax credits to those who create or maintain affordable accessory apartments. Annual certification with town officials that a unit meets current state affordability levels could substitute for the 10-year deed restriction considered onerous by property owners. This would not only encourage creation of new affordable units, it would also qualify many existing accessory apartments to be listed as affordable under state law.

Therefore Redding strongly endorses any proposed bill that increases the availability of affordable housing by reviewing current definitions to include accessory apartments.

Sincerely,

Natalie Ketcham  
First Selectman